

20-win season no guarantee for JCSU

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ment for inclusion. The Bulls, who finished 16-13 last season, made a 20-win campaign one of its goals, along with a division title and the first-round bye in the CIAA tournament.

"That was one of our goals, to get 20 wins, at least," center Charles Clark said. "And now that we see it, we really want it (more) than we ever wanted it before. That's one of our goals."

After that comes the playoffs. The rankings could change, but Smith's best bet is to play deep into the CIAA tournament to clinch a berth. The Bulls helped themselves by securing a first-round bye in next week's conference

tournament with an 81-75 win Tuesday against Fayetteville State. Smith can clinch first in the West Division with a win Saturday at N.C. Central.

"We want to get to the post-season because we haven't made it the last two years," Clark said. "This is my last year and me and a couple of the other guys really want to

get to the postseason. We really want to put Johnson C. Smith basketball back on the map like it used to be back in the day."

Knights ride high for playoffs

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season, is averaging 17.2 points per game, 5.7 rpg., with 2.8 spg., and 3.5 apg. Although Curry seems to be typecasts as the son of NBA great Dell Curry, Stephen believes his teammates respect and appreciate what he contributes to the Knights success this season.

Although Walton, who made a habit of working on his shooting touch, by maintaining a regiment of 500 jump shots a week during the off season, is a team leader, he appreciates the example set by Stephen.

is Omar Carter, a transfer from Phillip O'Berry Academy. Carter was conference player of the year with the Cardinals a year ago, but he is glad to have the chance to jell with Stephen and Walton in the Knights system.

"Stephen sets such a great example that people are kind of drawn to that," Walton said. "We are all sort of from different areas of life but we are close."

Walton averages 7.1 ppg., with 2.0 rpg., and 1.5 apg. The senior guard dedicates himself to working hard on his offense, but he is grateful for the on court chemistry he has with Stephen.

Carter averages 16 ppg., 6.0 rpg., and 1.3 apg., in his first season at Charlotte Christian.

"It's easy around our teammates, because they know what I can do on the court, and that I can make a name for myself," Stephen said.

"Stephen does a great job setting stuff up for me," Walton said.

"Coach Brown has put it in my head to play my role, so I had to tweak my game to play my role," Carter said. "Every night is not your night. I'd say we are united, we're all on the same page, self disciplined, and Stephen and Ben are great leaders."

Smith plays her role well

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Atlantic-10 because of players like Smith, who step into the limelight or create opportunities for teammates.

The third tier of the Knights successful dynamic

Charlotte Christian is set to play in Greensboro Thursday in the state playoff tournament.

"Tameka has a very high basketball IQ. She anticipates very well, and does a great job of using her quickness where she doesn't have size," Butler said. "She's going to beat you to the ball with her first step. She does a good job of boxing out and releasing at the right time. Meek has a good nose for the ball."

Being mature enough to know when to be the consummate role player is something Smith likes doing, but it doesn't always come easy.

"It depends on how the game is flowing, like when I see I can take advantage of this person, then I think 'Okay this is my night to score,' or when I feel this person is a tad bit taller or quicker than me, I say 'Look my teammates got my back, so I can do the little things,'" Smith said.

Bobcats' prize pupil quickly learning the NBA ropes

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have to bring it. No matter who it is you have to bring it."

Coach Bernie Bickerstaff said that Knight has had an opportunity to watch Knight while logging minutes at shooting guard.

point where we made a decision that we needed to kind of back off, and it was amazing some of the things that he started to pick up," Bickerstaff said. "Raymond's mental toughness and courage are very important. Raymond is physically strong, and they don't take advantage of him because he's really strong and he'll fight back. It just takes time."

When understanding what Felton is going through to become the best point guard he can become, shooting guard Kareem Rush said playing with Knight gives Felton an abundance of knowledge to prepare him to lead the Bobcats.

"By us putting him at the two position he has a feel of what's necessary when he goes to the point, in terms of where the two guy needs the ball," Bickerstaff said. "Playing with Brevin, who is probably one of the top point guards in the league intellectually is beneficial to him."

Bickerstaff has prescribed a formula to aid Felton's maturation, which will make the Bobcats more successful in the future.

"Time is key. We have to be careful that we aren't inundating him with a lot of different things. So it got to the



PHOTO: CURTIS WILSON

Charlotte Bobcats guard Raymond Felton has proven to be a quick study in his rookie NBA campaign.

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